

Analysis of Branding Characteristics of China Time-honored Brands from the Perspective of Official Websites

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Keywords: China time-honored brand; Official website; Branding

Abstract: The official website of the brand is an important channel for increasing brand equity in the Internet environment. Based on the theory of information integration, this study evaluates the brand status of the official website of China time-honored brands by means of content analysis, divides China time-honored brand websites into three categories: high-branding, medium-branding and low-branding, and refines the characteristics of branding under the three categories. In order to enrich China time-honored brand characters rely on the official website to build a brand theory of theoretical basis and practical guidance.

Introduction

China time-honored brand refers to a brand with a long history of products, skills, or services that have been passed down from generation to generation to form a good reputation. According to the Ministry of Commerce, the number of Chinese time-honored brands has decreased from more than 16,000 in the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China to the current 1,128^[1]. The 43rd CIDSR shows that as of December 2018, the number of Internet users in China reached 829 million^[2], and the rapid development of the network has brought new opportunities for the development of the China time-honored brand. The brand's official website is a reliable way for consumers to obtain brand information because of its low cost, no time and space restrictions, high interactivity, and high authority.

Throughout the past research has found that there are two main aspects of the research on China time-honored brand: first, from the perspective of historical and cultural heritage for the revival of the old Chinese brand, and second, from the perspective of brand management to put forward the revitalization strategy of China time-honored brand. At present, there is no research on the official website of the brand as the entry point of the research, systematically analyzing the current situation of the branding of China time-honored brand. According to this study, China time-honored brand is taken as the research object, and the evaluation criteria of the official website in the past research are sorted out, and the evaluation system of this research is formed. According to the standardized content analysis program, the following research purposes are achieved: 1) According to the consistency of various elements of the official website of China time honored brand, the official website of China's old brand name is classified; 2) evaluate the characteristics of each category branding, and provide theoretical guidance for the brand building of China time honored brands.

Literature Review

The Connotation and Function of the Branding of China Time-honored Brands. The purpose of branding Chinese old brands is to establish a unique and differentiated brand image in the minds of consumers. Aaker believes that brand is the external image of the company, is a complex and comprehensive framework, and he defines branding as the process of building a brand. By integrating different elements, creating a brand image different from competitors in the minds of

consumers^[3]. Brand image is a key component of a clear and identifiable brand identity in the marketplace^[4]. Branding is essentially the establishment of a differentiated brand recognition, this paper learns from Qu H and other methods of tourism destination branding, China time-honored branding focus through identification and differentiation of two functions to achieve^[5]. By identifying time-honored brand elements, establish a differentiated brand image, so as to accumulate the brand assets of China time-honored brand^[6].

The Level of Branding of the Official Website of China Time-honored Brands. Many scholars have proposed to use the advantages of the network economy on the issue of the rejuvenation of China time-honored brand, and rely on the new media to explore the excellent internal genes of the brands^[7]. China time-honored brand is presented through the highly consistent information on the official website, which helps consumers to correctly understand, identify and associate with these brands^[8]. The theory of information integration believes that the integration of new information and previous attitudes in the integration of information will adjust or strengthen the previous attitude^[9]. According to the principle of consistency of elements, combined with the characteristics of China time-honored brand, and collating the previous literature, this study initially established the evaluation index of the official website of China time-honored brand.

Research Methods

This study downloaded the list of all China time-honored brands from the China Time-honored Brand Information Management Platform of the Ministry of Commerce on April 10, 2019. First, we removed China time-honored brands that we could not find or open the website, and finally got 520 old brand websites including 26 provinces or autonomous regions. According to the scope of the statistical sample size proposed by Jianwen Yuan^[10], This study was sampled according to the 20% ratio of China time-honored brand category and the proportion of China time-honored brand in each region. It should be pointed out that the front page of the brand's official website is the main platform for collecting the elements of brand building^[11].

This study uses content analysis to analyze the research objects. Content analysis is an observational research method used to systematically evaluate all forms of content^[12]. The initial establishment of the official website of China time-honored brand evaluation indicators to operate the definition, and then sent to the relevant marketing experts for anonymous comments, to determine the final implementation criteria, see Table 1. Two graduate students were then coded between April 15-21, 2019. Coders classify the site into two categories according to each operational definition and record the coding results with a 0-1 variable, where "0" indicates that the site is classified as a "non-definition" category and "1" indicates that the site is classified as a "definition-compliant" category. Then use Perreault & Leigh's content analysis method to measure the consistency test for consistency test^[12]. The results of the reliability analysis are shown in Table 1. It is found that the reliability of the two coders is higher than the reliability requirement of 0.85 proposed by Kassarian^[13].

Table 1 Operational definition and evaluation reliability of website evaluation indicators

Index	Operational definition used in this study	Reliability estimate
Overall image consistency	Text, non-text, etc. reflect the brand slogan	0.942
	All kinds of information are consistently expressed, and each section is connected reasonably	0.962
Attractive web design	Reasonable layout of web pages	0.952
	Image, animation, video enhances website appeal	0.971
Brand image display	Brand name, logo performance brand connotation	0.933
	Product display is authentic, diverse	0.952
Site technology	Can be quickly found and opened with a search engine, the URL makes sense	0.942
	Multilingual service system	1
Interactivity	Responsive, up-to-date	0.990
	Provide online communication channels, official Weibo or WeChat links	1

Classification Results and Characterization

During the content analysis period, the official website of China time-honored brand can be opened. The specific analysis path is to evaluate each website according to the operational definition of Table 1 indicators, and evaluate the overall image display, web interface design, brand image display, Site technology and interactive metrics.

High-branding of China Time-honored Brand Websites. This kind of China time-honored brand website has high branding characteristics, a total of 38, accounting for 36.5% of the total sample, about 55% belong to the food processing industry and 21% belong to the pharmaceutical industry. The specific Chinese brand name and geographical distribution are shown in Fig. 1. Through the consistency of the exposed information, it presents a unified brand image, effectively utilizes the official website for branding, and establishes a differentiated and distinctive China time-honored brand image. Specifically, it has the following characteristics:

First of all, the text information and non-text information of the website are launched around the main line of China time-honored brand slogan, and the page display emphasizes the positioning of China time-honored brand by various means. The brand image is presented in a variety of ways, and basically establishes a unique and consistent brand image. Most websites provide real and reliable product introductions and vivid brand stories on the homepage. Secondly, the URLs of all websites have meaning, and one-third of the old brand websites provide multilingual systems. On the layout design of the website, most of the website pages are neat and tidy. Finally, in the interaction with consumers, all companies can keep up-to-date with the dynamics of the company, quickly feedback, and can get the social network contact information from the homepage of the website.



Fig. 1. Regional distribution of high-branding China time-honored brands

Medium-branding of China Time-honored Brand Websites. There are 45 such websites, accounting for 43.2% of the total number of samples. The brand name and geographical distribution

of China time-honored brands are shown in Fig. 2, and the geographical distribution is relatively uniform. In the distribution of the industry, food processing accounts for about 51%, and retail sales about 13%. In addition to individual old brand website, medium-branding China time-honored brands can basically achieve the consistency of display information, however, most websites display information that fails to effectively express corporate brand slogans and opinions, some websites even lack brand slogans. Specifically, it has the following characteristics:

The text information and non-text information of the website can basically express the brand information. Most websites have text content that revolves around brand slogans. But in highlighting the brand positioning, the category of China time-honored brand site in the choice of the way is relatively single. Secondly, in the network site technology, the category of sites and high-branded sites are not significantly different. The URL of most websites is meaningful and easy to spell, but only seven of the category's old-style brand sites offer Multilingual system. Finally, in the display of the brand image of the old character, the old brand of this category is more different, good and bad. Most sites give official Weibo and WeChat public numbers on their interactions with consumers, but more than half of them are slow to update or can't find the date of the latest updates.



Fig. 2. Regional distribution of medium-branding China time-honored brands

Low-branding of China Time-honored Brand Websites. There are 21 such sites, accounting for 20.3% of the total number of sample sites, while retail and food processing each account for 28%, with brand names and geographical distribution sits Fig. 3. The low consistency of the information elements displayed on such websites makes it more difficult for consumers to establish a clear brand image through information processing. Brand slogans, propositions and presentation of information are less consistent. The following characteristics are:

The layout of the page is unreasonable, there are a large number of white pages, picture size and resolution is not appropriate, the overall color is single, page richness is reduced. Secondly, only 1/3 of the site has brand slogans, and these brand slogans and the plate between the link is not close, can not show a clear brand appeal. Finally, the vast majority of the site URL of this category is meaningful and easy to remember, but some sites exist in the site first picture display is not complete.



Fig. 3. Regional distribution of low-branding China time-honored brands

Discussions

Research Conclusions and Discussion. Based on the research results of domestic and foreign scholars on the branding of official websites, this study comprehensively measures the web interface, consistent image, brand image display, site technology, interactivity and other indicators of the 104 old brand websites in accordance with the standardized content analysis method, and draws the following important conclusions: (1) This study focuses on the Ministry of Commerce published all the official websites of China time-honored brands, but after preliminary screening more than half of the China time-honored official website can not open or does not exist. (2) The sample of 104 old brands in accordance with the brand level can be divided into high-branding, medium-branding and low-branding 3 categories, accounting for 36.5%, 43.2%, 20.3% respectively. (3) In terms of industry distribution, food processing is about 46.7% of the total, with the food processing industry accounting for 55% and 51% respectively in the official website of the high-branding and medium-branding old brands. (4) Most of the official websites of the China time-honored brands around the corporate brand slogan presents a consistent and differentiated brand image with other brands.

Research Limitations and Future Research Prospects. The study still has shortcomings in the following areas: first, in the selection of some measures do not consider the influence of industry factors. Secondly, because the China time-honored brand enterprises are in different industries, different stages of development, so in its brand evaluation of the evaluation of the evaluation should be different. Finally, In evaluating the construction of the China time-honored brand should take into account the geographical and cultural differences.

This research still has a certain direction of expansion for future research: (1) This study uses content analysis method, the future can use data mining data analysis for the content of China time-honored brand website for a more objective brand evaluation. (2) Because of the imbalance in the development of China time-honored brand in the industry, the future research can choose a certain industry of China time-honored brand to do research on its branding.

Acknowledgements

Fund Project: Sichuan Provincial Key Research Base of Philosophy and Social Sciences—Sichuan Center for Rural Development Research General Project (CR1910); Sichuan Provincial Key Research Base of Philosophy and Social Sciences—Research Center for Sichuan Liquor Industry Development General Project (CJY19-03); Sichuan Province Philosophy and Social Science Key Research Base--Sichuan Agriculture Featured Brand Development and Communication Research Center General Project (CAB1810); Sichuan Agricultural University Social Science Key Project (2018ZD04)

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